

CONNECTICUT WEEKLY DIADROMOUS FISH REPORT

Report Date: May 24, 2016



This is a report generated by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection/ Inland Fisheries Division- Diadromous Program. For more information, contact Steve Gephard, 860/447-4316. For more information about fish runs on the Connecticut River visit the USFWS website at www.fws.gov/r5crc. For more information about Atlantic salmon, visit the Connecticut River Salmon Association at www.ctriversalmon.org.

CONNECTICUT RIVER LOCATIONS

FISHWAY (RIVER)	ATLANTIC SALMON	AMER. SHAD	ALEWIFE	BLUEBACK HERRING	GIZZARD SHAD	STRIPED BASS	SEA LAMPREY	SEA-RUN TROUT	AMER. EEL
Rainbow* (Farmington)	0	127	0	0	0	0	55	2	0
Leesville (Salmon)	0	-	0	some below	-	-	0***	1	0
StanChem* (Mattabeset)	0	36	303	0	82	-	12	3	0
Moulson Pond* (Eightmile)	0	7	83	2,948	0	0	24	0	-
Mary Steube* (Mill Brook)	-	-	406	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rogers Lake+ (Mill Brook)	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
WestSpringfield (Westfield- MA)	0	3,335	0	0	0	0	107	0	1
Holyoke (Connecticut- MA)	0	283,872	0	39	413	0	5,949	SNS= 19	0
Manhan River* (Manhan- MA)	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
Turners Falls* (Connecticut- MA)	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	0
Vernon* (Connecticut- VT)	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	0
Bellows Falls* (Connecticut- VT)	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	0
Wilder* (Connecticut- VT)	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
Other (all sites)	0								
TOTALS=	0	287,377	792	2,987	495	0	6,147	5	1
(last year's totals)	22	416,355	237	11,822	93	21	24,573	9	20,305

Fishways listed in gray font above are not yet opened for the season. In some cases, the fishways will be opened soon. In the case of the fishways on the Connecticut River, some fishways are not opened until significant numbers of fish pass through the fishway immediately downstream of them. If that never happens, the fishway may not be opened during the season.

*There is a video camera that records passage. There is a considerable lag between the date a tape is recorded and when staff is able to count fish from the tape, so these numbers will not represent up-to-date counts until after the end of spring season.*** Population estimates based on end-of-the-season nest surveys.- +There is an electronic fish counter at this fishway.

NOTE: All fish that pass through the Turners Falls, Vernon, Bellows Falls, and Wilder fishways had to first go through the Holyoke Fishlift where they were counted. Therefore those fish are not included in the totals at the bottom.

COMMENTS:

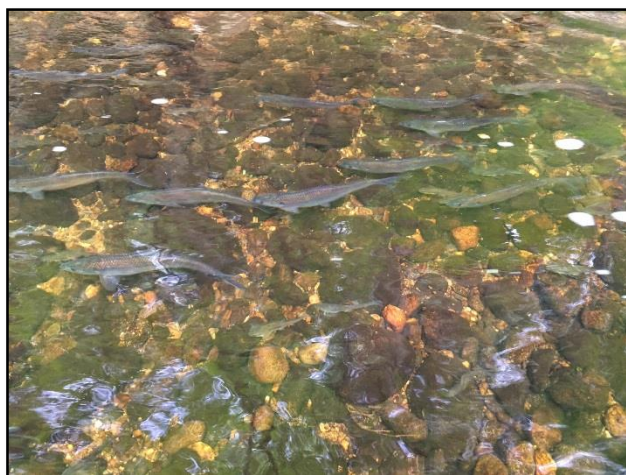
Holyoke continued to pass shad daily, mostly over 10,000 a day. The water temperature remains cool for this time of year (18C /64F for tributaries), although that may change after the next three days of forecasted hot weather. Tomorrow we will take our first trip to Holyoke to collect shad for transplanting in Connecticut streams. Ken's sampling in the tributaries indicate that all river herring are now blueback herring (well, except for one fish) but their numbers are still mostly low, especially at Holyoke. We did see another wave of them the last couple of days in the lower tributaries such as Higganum Creek below the falls, Eightmile River, Blackhall River (Bucky Brook)- thanks George James!, Salmon River and Pine Brook- see photo below. Our staff report good fishing for hickory shad near the mouth of the river. A couple more shortnose sturgeon lifted at Holyoke. One was previously lifted, tagged, and returned below the dam. The Turners Falls and Vernon fishways are open and passing fish. However, still no data being reported. This is very disappointing.

Here are some random thoughts on the runs so far- Shad: lagging behind but they still may be coming. Blueback herring- the next few days may tell the tale but likely another low year. Gizzard shad- a good year for the relatively newcomer, not just in the Connecticut River but coastal streams as well. More than we've seen and more widespread than in recent years. Sea lamprey- extremely low. Maybe more will show up this next week but the numbers everywhere are lower than normal. Jim reported seeing some this week on the Coginchaug but we have not seen any at Leesville yet and the number at Rainbow is very low. Ken has picked up a few in his electrofishing and saw a few nests on the mainstem near the I-91 bridge in Windsor Locks. Shortnose sturgeon- more than ever lifted before. We talked about this last week. Sea-run brown trout- a pretty good year. They're never seen in large numbers but we've picked up quick a few in many locations, including coastal streams.

In Massachusetts, the Merrimack River is reporting a strong alewife run to the fishlift at Lawrence, MA. Over 340,000 passed. This is a response to the resumption of trucking to Lake Winnisquam in 2012.



WORLD FISH MIGRATION DAY- We celebrated in many places. RI led off a day early by hosting an event in Westerly to cheer the White Rock Dam Removal on the CT/RI border. More fish are being seen up at the Potter Hill fishway. We had open houses at Greeneville (and successful Facebook/Twitter post), Rainbow, StanChem (a trout stayed in the window most of the day), Haakonsen (very busy from 11 to 1), Latimers Brook (Kirk was pulling them in from great distances), and the infamous Connecticut River Floatilla (see above photo) with ~13 boats and lots of ospreys!



Blueback herring swimming upstream in Pine Brook, a tidewater tributary of the Salmon River. (Photo by Ehren Meisinger)



American shad celebrating World Fish Migration Day at the Holyoke Dam Fishlift. (Photo courtesy of Ken Sprankle, USFWS).

OTHER LOCATIONS WITHIN CONNECTICUT

FISHWAY (RIVER)	AMER. SHAD	ALEWIFE	BLUEBACK HERRING	GIZZARD SHAD	STRIPED BASS	SEA LAMPREY	SEA-RUN TROUT	AMER. EEL
Greenville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	1,684	1,456	28	19	0	0	0	5
Taftville* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	33	0	2	0	0	0	0
Occum* (Shetucket R., Norwich)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunnel* (Quinebaug R., Preston)	4	34	0	5	0	0	0	0
Kinneytown* (Naugatuck R., Seymour)	0	5	0	4	0	26	0	0
Hallville Pond* (Poquetanuck Br. Preston)	-	15	0	1	lots of trout	-	0	0
Trading Cove Brook** - (Trading Cove Brook, Montville)	-	0	0	open/not counting		-	-	0
Jordan Brook** - (Jordan Brook, Waterford)	-	109	0	0	-	0	0	0
Latimers Brook** - (Latimers Br., E.Lyme)	-	4,226	0	-	-	-	0	-
Brides Brook** (Brides Brook, E.Lyme)		148,596	FINAL					
Branford Supply Pond Dam** (Queach Br., Branford)		1,514	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lower Guilford Lake** (East River, Guilford)		4,102	-			-	0	0
Haakonsen Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Wallingford)	0	1,096	51	38	0	103	2	1
Hanover Pond Fishway* (Quinnipiac R., Meriden)		5	0	0	-	3	-	0
Bunnells Pond* (Peqonnock R., Bridgeport)	-	3,175	0	9	0		1	
Wood Dam** (Saugatuck R., Westport)		1,666	115					
Mianus Pond* ** (Mianus R., Greenwich)		11,940	3,162	0	0	0	0	-

**Fish passage is video-recorded and counts are made off of tapes several days later so these data are always lagged a little behind. This report covers passage up to the following dates for these fishways:*

Greenville= 5/13 Taftville= 5/14. Occum= n.a. Tunnel= 5/22 Kinneytown= 5/22 Haakonsen= 5/22 Hallville= 5/22

******These locations have an electronic fish counter and are used as index sites for river herring runs. The counter is checked daily Monday-Friday. Monday counts typically include all weekend passage. These counts are usually up-to-date but some may lag behind a day or two, occasionally.

+This location has a fish trap and fish are enumerated prior to release.

Counts in parentheses indicate numbers seen in a run that is now over and no further fish were counted during the past week. Typically used for alewife runs later in June.

COMMENTS:

We were sure that the downrunning (spent) alewives were going to arrive at our Bride Brook trap over the weekend and we were checking carefully. When they arrive, we have to pull the trap to avoid a mass mortality. They didn't show up until yesterday so we opened the trap and completely pulled it today. So that run is over as are most coastal alewife runs. We also saw downrunning alewives at the Branford Water Supply Ponds Fishway. Over the week, we logged a few uprunners (Steube= 16, Branford= 81, Latimers= 18, Jordan= 18) but those were the final gasp. The exception might be Lower Guilford Lake (East River), which may be passing blueback herring, as are Mianus and Wood dams. Ray Baldwin reports 7 passed at Clarks Pond (which is a great report considering there is no counter there) but that stream seems classic alewife habitat—I doubt if there are blueback herring in there. Apparently, Ray is also passing wood ducklings on his eel pass but I don't have a column in the table for those data. Before the alewife run at Brides Brook ended, we trucked some fish to various streams in the state where we are working to restore runs. One such stream is the East Branch of the Eightmile River, where The Nature Conservancy just removed the Ed Bills Dam. The fish were released near Rt. 82 in Salem and when David Bingham is not looking for warblers, he watches the stream and saw these fish moving through. See attached video of David's assistant counting alewives in Salem. For a short video of underwater video of blueback herring spawning at Leesville (with spottail shiners eating the eggs) that I reported on last week, check out the Facebook posting of The Nature Conservancy- Connecticut Chapter- <https://www.facebook.com/CT.NatureConservancy/>

Many of these fishways are passing other species that we don't have room to report. Lots of trout, suckers and bass are being passed and some fishways like Haakonsen even pass sunfish and perch. Kinneytown has passed five Atlantic salmon broodstock (stocked upstream in the fall but apparently dropped down). As mentioned in the Connecticut River section, we are seeing gizzard shad in places where we haven't seen them (or many) in the past. Also sea-run brown trout. See the photo below taken from the video at Bunnells Pond Fishway on the Pequonnock River in Bridgeport.

Bunnell's Pond Fishway in Bridgeport, streaming video: <http://www.ctenvironment.org/#!/fish-cam/c1ei1>.

Hallville Fishway in Preston, streaming video: <http://conservect.org/eastern/CurrentProjects/tabid/528/Default.aspx>

EEL PASSAGE: Fishing Brook= 5,981 glass/164 yellow; Mill River= 39 glass/81 yellow; Greenville= 8 glass/276 yellow, Lower Millpond= 210 glass/18 yellow; Clarks Pond= glass present but not enumerated.

My weekly Diadromous Fish Radio show is live on iCRV (www.iCRVradio.com) at 8:00 am on Wednesday and re-played at 3:00 and 7:00 pm that day and 8 am on Saturday. In addition to updates on fish runs, this week we'll be talking about sea lamprey and its restoration to Connecticut streams.



A beautiful sea-run brown trout passing the window at the Bunnells Pond Fishway. Note the chrome silver coloration—fresh from saltwater.



This sturgeon is not from Connecticut but from a Rhode Island beach this past week (photo sent by Suzanne Paton, USFWS). The suggestion was made to inspect it for tags.